

SECTION 2.0

INTRODUCTION

2.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) are informational documents “which will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project” (Section 15121 of the CEQA Guidelines). The purpose of this EIR is to evaluate the environmental effects of the proposed EastLake III Senior Housing Project, hereinafter referred to as “the proposed project,” which involves proposed amendments to the City of Chula Vista General Plan, EastLake III General Development Plan (GDP) and EastLake III Sectional Planning Area (SPA) Plan and associated regulatory documents as well as a Tentative Map (TM). The proposed General Plan, GDP and SPA amendments involve a change to the currently approved land use designation for the site. The proposed EastLake Seniors Housing Project conceptual TM provides lotting and public improvement details for proposed multi-family housing and accessory uses.

This EIR is intended for use by both decision makers and the public. It provides relevant information concerning the potential environmental effects associated with the construction and operation of an active senior housing residential project. The Lead Agency for the project is the City of Chula Vista.

To understand the purpose and scope of this EIR, a short history of the planning and environmental review conducted to-date on the proposed project site in the EastLake Planned Community is necessary. Development of the EastLake Planned Community has occurred in phases beginning with EastLake I, followed by EastLake II and then finally EastLake III (EastLake I and EastLake II were later combined so in effect there are currently two planning areas – EastLake II and EastLake III). The planning of each portion of the EastLake Planned Community began in 1982 and has occurred through several planning phases – starting with general parameters and culminating with specific guidelines. A GDP was prepared for each development phase within the EastLake community. A GDP provides a policy bridge between the Chula Vista General Plan and detailed project development planning provided in a SPA Plan. SPA Plans were then developed for each of the specific neighborhoods/development areas. SPA plans refine and implement the development concepts outlined in the GDPs. In general, the EastLake SPA plans define the land use mix, design criteria, primary circulation patterns, open space and recreation concepts and infrastructure requirements.

Environmental documentation pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) has mirrored the tiered planning approach described above. Because of the size, complexity of issues and extended build-out time frame of the EastLake development, both the planning and environmental documentation associated with EastLake were tiered from the general to the specific. The first tier of planning and approvals included the EastLake Planned Community Master EIR (EIR #81-03) in February 1982. Subsequent EIRs have been prepared for GDP Amendments and SPA Plans within EastLake I, II and III, including the Final EIR for EastLake Greens SPA and EastLake Trails Pre-zone and Annexation (EIR #86-04) in 1989 and the Final EIR for the EastLake Greens and EastLake Trails Replanning Program (EIR #97-04) in 1998. The Final EIR for EastLake III, Olympic Training Center (OTC) (EIR #89-09) was prepared in October 1989 and included the SPA plan for the OTC. It also included the GDP for all of EastLake III as well as a proposal to annex EastLake II and the Trails (EastLake II) from the unincorporated area of San Diego County into the City of Chula Vista. The most recent environmental document prepared for the site is the Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the EastLake III Woods and Vistas Replanning Program (FSEIR #01-01) dated June 2001 and addendum dated May 2001. This Subsequent EIR addressed the EastLake III GDP and SPA.

As described in CEQA sections 15152 and 15153, tiering is a process by which agencies can adopt an overall project with a programmatic, or “first tier”, EIR focusing on the “big picture” and then use subsequent CEQA review for individual projects that are more specific components of such a first tier decision. This approach eliminates repetitive discussions of the same issues and focuses the EIR on the actual issues required for decision at each level of environmental review.

The proposed project is located in the Vistas community of the EastLake III SPA plan area. This analysis tiers from the June 2001 FSEIR #01-01 which in turn tiers off the original October 1989 Final EIR for EastLake III, Olympic Training Center, EastLake Trails Prezone and Annexation (hereinafter referred to as EIR #89-09). Therefore, this EIR is a subsequent EIR to the June 2001 FSEIR (FSEIR #01-01). Under such tiering principals, the proposed GDP Amendment analysis is presented and should be reviewed at a subsequent, first-tier level of review. The SPA Amendment analysis is presented and should be reviewed at a second-tier EIR level of review (project-level).

While a second-tier analysis can rely on a first-tier analysis, it has the obligation to discuss any changed circumstances or new information that might alter the first-tier analysis. Under principals of tiering, if a first-tier document found significant impacts, then the second-tier EIR must require the mitigation measures unless the analysis explains that the measures are not applicable or that other mitigation measures can replace the previous measures and similarly

reduce the impacts to a level of insignificance. As such, each environmental analysis section in this EIR identifies the avoidable and unavoidable significant environmental impacts previously identified in FSEIR #01-01 and EIR #89-09 and the required mitigation measures. This EIR also evaluates whether the previously required mitigation measures pertaining to this portion of the SPA plan are still applicable, or whether there are other feasible mitigation measures that were not previously considered that might similarly reduce the stated impacts to less than significant. The Executive Summary and Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program list all mitigation measures that apply to the proposed project from previous tiers of environmental review as well as new measures required by this analysis.

The environmental impacts of the implementation of the proposed General Plan, GDP and SPA amendments are analyzed in *Sections 5.0 through 9.0* of this EIR. *Sections 5.1 through 5.9* consist of the following:

- Introduction and Methodology (including a summary of applicable impacts from previous EIRs).
- Existing Conditions
- Thresholds of Significance
- Environmental Impacts
- Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation
- Mitigation Measures (including applicable mitigation measures from previous EIRs)
- Residual Impacts/Level of Significance after Mitigation

It should be noted that the EastLake III GDP, as currently adopted, is consistent with the adopted City of Chula Vista General Plan (December 2005). The proposed GDP amendments would therefore also require an amendment to the General Plan to maintain consistency with the City's overarching land use planning guide. The General Plan amendments would consist of revisions to the text and map of the General Plan, as described in more detail in *Section 3.0, Project Description*. The physical environmental effects of the General Plan amendments would generally not be different from those associated with the proposed GDP amendments since the proposed changes to the General Plan are consistent with the proposed GDP amendments.

2.2 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Compliance

This EIR has been prepared in accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et. seq); the CEQA Guidelines published by the Resources Agency of the State of California

(California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et. seq, as amended) and the City of Chula Vista Environmental Review Procedures. Pursuant to Sections 15150 and 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines, this document is prepared as a subsequent EIR. This EIR also references each relevant previous EIR that has amended the General Plan or GDP, such as EIR #89-09 and FSEIR #01-01.

According to Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency may incorporate all or portions of another environmental document available to the public to avoid redundancy in the environmental review process. Applicable sections from the previous environmental documents have been summarized and incorporated into this EIR. All documents incorporated by reference are available for review at the City of Chula Vista. These documents include the following:

- October 1989 Final EIR for EastLake III, Olympic Training Center, EastLake Trails Prezone and Annexation (EIR #89-09)
- June 2001 Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the EastLake III Woods and Vistas Replanning Program and subsequent Addendum (FSEIR #01-01)

Notice of Preparation

In compliance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of Chula Vista Planning and Building Department circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP), dated September 2, 2005, to interested agencies, groups and individuals. All comments received during the NOP public notice period were considered during the preparation of the Draft EIR. The NOP and comments are included in *Appendix A* of this EIR. Based on the scope of analysis for this EIR, the following issues were determined to be potentially significant and are therefore addressed in *Sections 5.0* through *9.0* of this document:

- Land Use, Planning and Zoning
- Landform Alteration/Aesthetics
- Geology and Soils
- Water Resources and Water Quality
- Transportation, Circulation and Access
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Public Services and Utilities
- Biological Resources

2.3 USES OF THIS EIR

As the designated Lead Agency, the City has assumed responsibility for preparing this document. The City will use the information included in this EIR to consider potential impacts to the physical environment associated with the project when making the decision to implement the project. The Draft EIR will be made available for review to the public and public agencies for 45 days to provide comments on the “sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated” (Section 15204 of the CEQA Guidelines).

The City will use the EIR and supporting documentation in its decision to issue discretionary permits and approvals, including a General Plan Amendment (GPA), General Development Plan Amendment (GDPA), EastLake III SPA Plan Amendment (SPA Plan Amendment) and Tentative Subdivision Map (TM).

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) will use the EIR and supporting documentation in its decision to issue water quality permits in accordance with the Porter-Cologne Act, such as a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit.

2.4 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY/ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

None known at time of EIR publication.